

	<b>State of Alaska Department of Corrections Policies and Procedures</b>	<b>Index #:</b> 813.01	<b>Page 1 of 6</b>
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	<b>Chapter:</b> Academic and Vocational Education		
	<b>Subject:</b> Academic and Vocational Program		

#### Authority

In accordance with 22 AAC 05.155, the Department will maintain a manual comprised of policies and procedures established by the Commissioner to interpret and implement relevant sections of the Alaska Statutes and 22 AAC.

#### References

##### Alaska Administrative Code

22 AAC 05.340

22 AAC 05.345

##### Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 3rd Edition 1990

3-4399, 3-4401, 3-4410 thru 3-4414, 3-4418 thru 3-4422-1

##### Standards for Adult Local Detention Facilities, 3rd Edition 1991

3-ALDF-5A-11, 5B-01 thru 5B-03.

#### Purpose

To establish uniform procedures within the Department for academic and vocational programs.

#### Application

To all staff.

#### Policy

- A. **The Department will encourage prisoners to continue their education.** Each facility shall have an educational program that includes Educational Philosophy and Goals, Adult Basic Education (ABE), General Equivalency Diploma (GED) preparation, Life Skills programs, and correspondence courses. Prisoners in jails may pursue correspondence post-secondary education studies at their own expense. Additionally, sentenced facilities shall make available a Post-Secondary Education program and Vocational Education programs.
- B. The Department will provide Educational Coordinators at each facility to coordinate, develop, and implement a prisoner education program that is consistent with the needs of the prisoner population, and to provide academic and vocational counseling to prisoners. The Department will assign an administrative staff member to provide oversight and coordination for all education and vocational programs.
- C. The Department will evaluate the academic and vocational programs. Provision will be made for outside review of educational programs on an as-needed basis.

#### Procedures

##### A. General

###### 1. Prisoner Eligibility

All prisoners are eligible for education programs.

###### 2. Availability

The Department will have day and evening programs, where staff and resources allow, so prisoners may combine employment with their training. The Department shall

stagger the entry into classes or programs where appropriate, to allow prisoners to enter at any time and proceed at their own learning pace. Each Education Coordinator shall maintain a waiting list for educational programs.

3. Achievement Recognition

The Department will formally acknowledge prisoners' accomplishments with diplomas, certificates, and other awards. In cases where state or federal regulations provide specific diplomas or certificates (e.g., GED, First Aid, DOL Certificate of Apprenticeship), internal institution certificates may not replace the required document.

B. Adult Basic Education

1. The Department will provide Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs at all correctional facilities.
2. Adult Basic Education will include basic academic instruction in reading, writing, and computational skills below the ninth-grade level. ABE services, including English as a Second Language and Literacy, are available for adults whose inability to speak, read, or write the English language or perform basic math computations prevents their functioning at the highest level of their ability to meet family, job, and societal responsibilities.
3. Prisoners enrolling in ABE classes will be counseled and tested using appropriate instruments for math and reading ability and placed based on their needs and abilities.

C. General Equivalency Degree (GED)

1. The Department will provide Adult Secondary Education in the form of instruction leading to a General Equivalency Degree (GED) at all correctional facilities.
2. The Education Coordinator shall follow all applicable state and federal regulations regarding administration, scoring, and test security of the GED.

D. Life Skills Program

The Department will provide a Life Skills program at each facility. The Life Skills program provides learning opportunities directed at independent living through practical preparation in a variety of areas. The program will include, at a minimum, classes, services, and other information in four core curriculum areas:

1. Health and Safety  
Includes programs in anger and stress management, CPR/First Aid, personal hygiene, and decision-making;
2. Communications  
Includes programs in interpersonal relationships, parenting, assertiveness, and values clarification;
3. Cultural Activities  
Includes programs in cross-cultural communications, Native languages, and cultural awareness events and activities; and
4. Pre-Release/Pre-Employment Preparation  
Includes programs in career planning, budgeting and money management, consumer education, job-seeking skills, and resume writing.

E. Post-Secondary Program

1. Programs at Particular Institutions

The Department will make available a post-secondary degree program for prisoners at designated sentenced facilities.

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2. **Delivery Methods**

The program shall be provided through a combination of distance, interactive, and on-site delivery methods. The delivery methods will vary for each curriculum component and will be based on the most cost-effective manner of providing instruction.

3. **Program Requirement and Remedial Course Work**

The program shall include developmental and general education courses.

- a. Where interest warrants, non-credit and CEU-bearing courses may be offered in addition to the developmental and general education requirement courses.

4. **Supplemental Instruction**

At each facility with a post-secondary program, the Department will offer prisoners on-site tutorial assistance and necessary supplemental instruction for telecommunications courses as resources permit. Education Coordinators, contractors, or qualified prisoners may provide this service.

5. **Responsibilities for Costs**

Prisoners are responsible for all tuition, enrollment, and course material costs associated with this program. The Department will assist prisoners in applying for grants and loans to pay for post-secondary education programs.

6. **Prisoner Transfers**

The Department will consider a prisoner's educational course work when deciding administrative transfers.

F. **Vocational Education Programs**

The Department will provide one or more vocational training programs accredited by a recognized agency, which may include the United States Department of Labor, the Alaska Post-Secondary Commission, or other appropriate certifying entity, at each sentenced facility. The vocational training programs shall be consistent with the needs of the prisoner population, the employment opportunities in the community, and may be tied to employment opportunities within the given institution.

1. Vocational education means organized programs that offer a sequence of courses that are directly related to the preparation of individuals for employment in occupations not requiring a bachelor's or advanced degree. Vocational programs should include competency-based applied learning and instruction in occupation-specific skills.
2. Individual employment-related courses that do not meet certification standards may be provided through the Life Skills component of the education program. These courses are to augment, and not replace, certified vocational and apprenticeship programs in the sentenced facilities.
3. Vocational education programs must meet any minimum applicable federal, state, or local work, health, and safety standards. Staff responsible for a program shall ensure the program is inspected annually by appropriate officials, and shall retain records of such inspections.
4. Vocational education programs shall also be inspected weekly by qualified staff, and monthly by the Safety Officer.

G. **Institutional Education Plans**

The Education Coordinator, in consultation with the facility Superintendent or designee, shall develop an annual written, standardized, competency-based education plan and spending plan (see section H below) that addresses all elements of required education programming and services. The plan will be approved by the facility Superintendent and

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submitted for final approval to the Division of Institution's Criminal Justice Planner for final approval. At a minimum, the plan must include:

1. A summary of the program services and goals, description of the facility and support services available;
2. A program plan which describes the objectives, activities, outcomes, timelines, appropriate materials and classroom resources, and staffing for each of the five education program components (ABE, GED, Life Skills, Post-Secondary, Vocational);
3. Standards for admission to each educational program;
4. A description of methods for internal evaluation of the program;
5. A schedule of classes;
6. A description of the record-keeping process, both for individual prisoner records and program records and statistics;
7. A process to recognize prisoner achievements;
8. A process for supervising GED and other testing, including adherence to any applicable state or federal regulations;
9. A description of the means by which the local community, businesses, and outside educators will be accessed for program options; and
10. A budget as described in section H.

**H. Education Budget and Fiscal Responsibility**

1. Each institution's education program will receive an authorized budget from the Division of Institution's Criminal Justice Planner.
2. The Education Coordinator shall develop a spending plan for the institution, which supports the institution's annual plan. The budget must address all anticipated professional services contracts, major and ongoing expenditures for supplies and equipment, and sufficient "un-obligated" funds to cover expenditures that were not anticipated at the time the institutional plan was developed.
3. The Criminal Justice Planner will approve the individual educational spending plan as part of the institution's education plan. Copies of the budget will be provided to the Administrative Assistant for inmate programs.
4. The Administrative Assistant shall monitor institutional education budgets, as well as all procurements made through these budgets, on an ongoing basis, using standard accounting procedures. All purchases require prior approval by the Director of Institutions.
5. The Department will evaluate each education program on an ongoing basis, as described under section K of this policy. The Assistant Director of Programs will request additional staff or funding if existing personnel or programs are insufficient.

**I. Needs Assessment and Planning**

The Education Coordinator, in consultation with appropriate institutional staff, shall assess and help plan prisoners' academic or vocational needs on an as-needed basis. At a minimum, the Education Coordinator shall:

1. Provide counseling to individual prisoners regarding their educational and employment background, academic functioning, and test results; and
2. Survey the general prisoner population to determine prisoners' interests and goals.

**J. Record Keeping**

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The Education Coordinator shall establish a record system, which maintains a student's rights to privacy and confidentiality, and accounts for, at a minimum:

1. Individual prisoner attendance, participation, and progress;
2. Program participation statistics required by the monthly reports; and
3. Individual and program records required by other agencies.

**K. Program Review**

**1. Internal Review**

Education program reviews will be accomplished at both the institutional level and by Division of Institution staff. Reviews will include observation of educational activities, interviews with institutional staff, contractors, volunteers and prisoners, and other collateral contacts as indicated. Upon completion of an on-site review, a report will be prepared of the program review. The report will include an evaluation of the over-all program and suggestions for any curriculum or program changes that would enhance the program operation. The final report will be provided to all parties consistent with the Division of Institutions' audit practices.

**a. Frequency of program reviews**

Evaluation will occur through ongoing review of student records, monthly reports, and annual education plans. On-site reviews will occur when resources are available.

**b. Evaluation Subject Areas**

In reviewing education programs at the institutional and division level, the following factors will be addressed:

- (1) Total student participation;
- (2) Individual program achievements;
- (3) Personnel status;
- (4) Problem areas;
- (5) Curriculum revisions;
- (6) Comparison of stated specific program goals and achievements; and
- (7) Any other pertinent items.

**2. Outside Review**

The Department will comply with, and assist in, the completion of reviews by outside agencies when required. Reviews may be required by funding agencies, as well as by agencies providing services within the facilities (e.g., the University of Alaska). The Criminal Justice Planner shall coordinate implementation of any required reviews. The procedures established by the reviewing agency must be followed whenever possible within the confines of institutional security.

**L. Personnel**

**1. Education Personnel Certification**

The Department will require that employees and contractors providing education services meet the Work Place Alaska class specification for Education Coordinator (Corrections).

**2. Education Coordinator's Responsibilities**

An Education Coordinator shall:

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- a. Ensure initial screening, assessment, and evaluation to determine each prisoner's educational needs;
- b. Evaluate vocational and educational programs regularly to ensure that the programs meet prisoners' needs, including placement for those with physical, mental, emotional, or learning disabilities;
- c. Maintain class schedules;
- d. Procure and maintain the necessary vocational and education classroom space and equipment, including audio-visual equipment, chalkboards, etc., within the budget established by the Division of Institutions;
- e. Maintain admission standards for each program;
- f. Ensure that a method of maintaining individual academic records, as well as program records and statistics, exists;
- g. Coordinate with other institutional services to provide instruction in functional social skills;
- h. Ensure that incentives for educational participation and an achievement recognition process exists;
- i. Submit a monthly report to the Superintendent concerning enrollment, attendance, achievements, progress, equipment needs, graduates, etc.; and
- j. Ensure that vocational and educational counseling is available to prisoners.

Implementation

This policy and procedure is effective 14 days following the date signed by the Commissioner. Each Manager shall incorporate the contents of this document into local policy and procedure. All local policies and procedures must conform to the contents of this document; any deviation from the contents of this document must be approved in writing by the Division Director.

May 23, 2002

Date

*Margaret M. Pugh*

Margaret M. Pugh, Commissioner  
Department of Corrections

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